



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

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| SUBJECT BEREAVEMENT LEAVE | POLICY NO. 604.7 | EFFECTIVE DATE 02/01/98 | PAGE 1 of 4 |
| APPROVED BY: original signed by: ARETA CROWELL Director | SUPERSEDES 12/01/90 | ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 12/01/90 | DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1 |

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy and guidelines for DMH employees to request and obtain bereavement leave in accordance with Los Angeles County Code provisions and Memoranda of Understanding between County unions and the Board of Supervisors.
- 1.2 Questions related to the qualifying conditions or use of bereavement leave should be directed to the Employee Relations Representative in the Human Resources Bureau. Questions related to accrued time benefits, coding of timecards, and record retention should be addressed to the Bureau's Payroll Unit.

QUALIFYING CONDITIONS

- 2.1 A full-time, permanent employee who is compelled to be absent due to the death of a relative, as identified in Section 2.5 below, is allowed up to three days of paid bereavement leave. Bereavement leave need not be taken in consecutive days.
- 2.2 A full-time, permanent employee who is compelled to be absent from work due to the death of the employee's domestic partner shall be entitled to leave for bereavement provided that the time off shall be charged to the employee's available accrued overtime, accrued benefit time other than sick leave, or taken as time off without pay as elected by the employee.
 - 2.2.1 For the purposes of this policy, a "domestic partner" is an individual who is at least 18 years of age, unmarried, and not related by blood to the employee closer than would bar marriage in the State of California; lived with the employee in a mutually exclusive relationship in which the employee and the individual were jointly responsible for each other's welfare and financial obligation; and resided with the employee in the same principal residence on an indefinite basis.
- 2.3 A full-time, monthly recurrent employee or full-time, monthly temporary employee who is compelled to be absent due to the death of a relative, as identified in Section 2.5 below, is allowed a maximum of eight hours of paid bereavement leave per year if he or she has completed at least 200 days of active service in the preceding calendar year; or four hours of paid bereavement leave per year if he or she has completed less than 200 days of active service.



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- 2.4 Daily, hourly, and part-time employees do not qualify for paid bereavement leave.
- 2.5 The qualifying relationships for paid bereavement leave are: father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, grandmother, grandfather, grandson or granddaughter.
- 2.6 A full-time, permanent employee who is required to travel a minimum of 1,500 miles one way in connection with the bereavement of a relative, as identified in Section 2.5 above, is eligible to receive up to two additional work days of paid bereavement leave.
- 2.7 When death occurs of two or more qualifying family members at the same time, the permanent, full-time employee receives up to three days paid bereavement leave for each qualifying family member. However, this provision does not apply to the additional two days for travel in excess of 1,500 miles one way.
- 2.8 Reasonable time off needed beyond the identified bereavement leave days may be authorized and covered by available accrued leave benefits (except sick leave), accrued overtime or unpaid leave. Supervisors may authorize reasonable time off (either unpaid leave or available paid leave except sick leave) for employees bereaving the death of a relative not listed in Section 2.5. Approval for this additional time is subject to operational considerations.

ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE

- 3.1 The following are acceptable evidence of death:
- 3.1.1 Death certificate;
 - 3.1.2 Obituary notice;
 - 3.1.3 Letter from attending physician, clergyman, or mortician attesting to the death and identifying the relationship; or
 - 3.1.4 Printed funeral program identifying the employee and relationship to the deceased.
- 3.2 For the death of a domestic partner, since the employee's absence would either be unpaid or covered by the employee's accrued time, verification of the death and relationship normally would not be needed. However, when, on occasion, verification is needed to establish the compelling nature of the leave under Subsection 2.2.1, the supervisor may require reasonable verification of the relationship, which could include a Declaration of Domestic Partnership filed with an insurance company or the supervisor's personal knowledge of the domestic partner relationship; evidence of the death may also then be required.



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- 3.3 The following are acceptable evidence of travel of 1,500 miles or more one way:
- 3.3.1 Train, airline or boat ticket with the employee's name on it;
 - 3.3.2 Gasoline receipt, showing date of purchase and city or a credit card receipt showing the same information with the employee's name on it; or
 - 3.3.3 Hotel/motel lodging receipt with the employee's name on it.
- 3.4 When the above types of evidence are unavailable, other evidence may be used, upon which a reasonable person can conclude that the death was of a qualifying relative or of a domestic partner, or that travel of 1,500 miles or more one way, actually occurred.

PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING APPROVAL

- 4.1 Prior to absenting himself/herself from work or completing a "Request for Time Off or Overtime" (ROTO), given the often unanticipated nature of the leave request, the employee shall discuss the need for the leave with his or her supervisor or manager. The employee is to be conditionally authorized the leave subject to the receipt of acceptable evidence.
- 4.2 A ROTO for paid bereavement leave must be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor as soon as possible after the death of a relative. On the ROTO, the word "bereavement" is to be written in the box entitled "Other." The ROTO shall identify if other paid time off or unpaid leave is requested.
- 4.3 Acceptable evidence to document the death, relationship and any travel in excess of 1,500 miles, one way, is to be attached to the ROTO. If the evidence is not available at the time the ROTO is completed, the employee must submit it at the time he or she returns to work, unless other arrangements have been authorized by the supervisor or manager, giving reasonable time to provide such evidence.

TIMECARD RECORDING AND RECORD RETENTION

- 5.1 For those employees who qualify for bereavement leave, only the time allowed under Sections 2.1, 2.3, 2.6 and 2.7, as applicable, is to be coded "B" on the employee's timecard. All other time used for bereavement purposes shall be coded with the specific accrued time or unpaid status.
- 5.2 FLSA-covered employees and non-salaried physicians shall record bereavement leave rounded to the nearest quarter hour, if less than a day increment.



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- 5.3 FLSA-exempt and salaried physicians shall record bereavement leave in full shift increments only.
- 5.4 All timecards, ROTOs, and supporting evidence for bereavement leave shall be retained for no less than three years.

AUTHORITY

Los Angeles County Code
Memoranda of Understanding